



## Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration  
P.O. Box 3621  
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

March 28, 2013

In reply refer to: KEC-4

### **To: People Interested in the Walla Walla Basin Spring Chinook Hatchery Program**

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to fund a proposal by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) to construct and operate a hatchery for spring Chinook salmon in the Walla Walla River basin (*please see the enclosed map*). This letter briefly explains what is being proposed, our environmental review process and schedule, and invites you to meetings where you can learn more about and comment on the proposed program.

#### **Proposal**

The proposal is to construct a hatchery at the CTUIR's existing Adult Holding and Spawning Facility on the South Fork Walla Walla River near Milton-Freewater in Umatilla County, Oregon, to allow production of up to 500,000 yearling spring Chinook smolts. Program operations would include collection of adult spring Chinook for broodstock at Nursery Bridge Dam downstream of the proposed hatchery, incubation and rearing of juvenile spring Chinook, and release of smolts and adults in tributaries to the Walla Walla River in both Oregon and Washington. Spring Chinook were extirpated from the Walla Walla River basin in the early to mid-1900s. The proposal would augment fish populations available for harvest and aid in establishing a naturally spawning spring Chinook population.

BPA is proposing to fund the CTUIR's proposal in accordance with its responsibilities under the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act of 1980 (Northwest Power Act) and the 2008 Columbia Basin Fish Accords Memorandum of Agreement.

#### **Environmental Review**

To understand the potential environmental impacts of this proposal, BPA will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. In the EIS, BPA will consider funding CTUIR's proposal and a no action alternative of not funding the proposal. The EIS will describe anticipated impacts to natural and human resources and will include mitigation measures to avoid or minimize those impacts. During this process, BPA will be working with federal, state and local agencies, tribes, landowners, and interest groups.

BPA will produce a Draft EIS for review and comment in early 2014. If you would like to receive a copy of the Draft EIS, please indicate on the enclosed comment form as to how you would like to receive it once it is available. If you would like to be taken off the project mailing list, please mark the box on the form. If you do not return the form, you will still receive notice when the Draft EIS is available.

BPA will produce a Final EIS in summer of 2014. Based on the analysis in the Final EIS, BPA will select an alternative and prepare a Record of Decision.

## Public Meetings

We are starting to assess the potential environmental impacts of the proposed alternatives, and we would like to hear from you. What questions do you have? What resources should we analyze? Do you have information or concerns about specific areas? BPA is seeking public input and comments through April 29, 2013.

We have scheduled two meetings to hear your input and accept comments related to the scope of the EIS that will be prepared:

**Tuesday, April 16, 2013**  
**6:00 to 8:00 p.m.**  
**Milton-Freewater Community Building**  
**109 N.E. 5th**  
**Milton-Freewater, Oregon 97862**

**Wednesday, April 17, 2013**  
**6:00 to 8:00 p.m.**  
**Dayton Elementary School**  
**302 E. Park**  
**Dayton, Washington 99328**

We plan to have maps and other information about the project available at these meetings, and members of the project team will give a brief overview of the proposal, answer questions, and accept oral and written comments. If you would like to hear an overview, these are scheduled from 6:30 to 7:00 p.m. during each meeting.

If you are unable to attend a meeting, you can still comment. Comments may be submitted online at [www.bpa.gov/comment](http://www.bpa.gov/comment), or you may return the enclosed comment form or other written correspondence in the postage-paid envelope provided, or you may fax your comments to (503) 230-4019. You also may call us with your comments toll free at (800) 622-4519. Please submit comments to us by **April 29, 2013**, and reference the “*Walla Walla Basin Spring Chinook Hatchery Program*” with your comments. We will post all comments we receive on our website at [www.bpa.gov/goto/WallaWallaHatchery](http://www.bpa.gov/goto/WallaWallaHatchery).

## For More Information

To find out more about the proposed program, visit [www.bpa.gov/goto/WallaWallaHatchery](http://www.bpa.gov/goto/WallaWallaHatchery), or contact the project manager, Jay Marcotte. Jay can be reached by phone at (503) 230-3943 or by e-mail at [jgmarcotte@bpa.gov](mailto:jgmarcotte@bpa.gov). If you have questions regarding the environmental process, you can contact me by phone at (503) 230-5928 or by e-mail at [baguirre@bpa.gov](mailto:baguirre@bpa.gov). Thank you for your interest in the proposal.

Sincerely,

/s/ Brenda Aguirre

Brenda Aguirre  
 Environmental Coordinator

Enclosures:  
 Project Map  
 Comment Form  
 Return Envelope  
 Reply Card